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Review of the implementation of the recommendations and decisions adopted by the General Assembly at its tenth special session

Work of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters held its sixty-fifth session in Geneva from 27 to 29 January 2016 and its sixty-sixth session in New York from 29 June to 1 July 2016. During those sessions, it focused on the following agenda items: the challenges facing the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and its review process, with a particular focus on the Middle East: lessons learned from non-United Nations and regional processes; the relationship between sustainable development, security and arms control; and the emerging nexus between chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear threats, cybersecurity and terrorism.

With respect to the challenges facing the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and its review process, with a particular focus on the Middle East: lessons learned from non-United Nations and regional processes, the Board recommended that the review process concentrate on the delivery of actionable recommendations focused on the next five-year cycle. Members of the Board underlined the need to address some of the most pressing issues associated with nuclear weapons, non-proliferation and disarmament, including the following:

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(a) Agreement on a precise agenda on appropriate and specific steps in the field of nuclear disarmament. Such steps would include confidence-building and transparency measures aimed at reducing nuclear risks and promoting responsible nuclear policies, building upon the final document of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I)) with its 64 action points, which all the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons should continue to support and implement;

(b) The lessons and consequences of non-compliance cases;

(c) The withdrawal of the Democratic Republic of Korea from the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and its repeated challenges to Security Council resolutions. Full compliance by all States Members of the United Nations with Council resolution 2270 (2016) should be encouraged. The Board's recommendations with regard to the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction are contained in paragraph 19 of the present report.

The Board recommended that the Secretary-General take the initiative to facilitate ratification, with a view to accelerating the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and provide all possible support for the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and to expand and strengthen the organization's monitoring work.

The Board recommended that the Secretary-General urge all countries that possess nuclear weapons, both recognized nuclear weapon States under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and others, to display transparency and, as a first step, unilaterally release reports at the Conference on Disarmament stating the role of nuclear weapons in their national security policies, as well as the numbers and types of their nuclear weapons.

The Board recommended that the Secretary-General commission a study, implemented with the participation of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), on the development of long-range conventional weapons, including those using hypersonic technologies.

The Board recommended that the Secretary-General commission a United Nations-initiated study on a multilateral intermediate-range missile regime, and ensure that discussions in preparation for the study involve representatives of all the States that possess intermediate-range missiles.

The Board suggested that, at its sixty-seventh and sixty-eighth sessions, a review be conducted on the implementation of the recommendations made in the United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education (A/57/124), taking into account the latest experience and new technologies in the area of education programmes, as well as the role of civil society organizations.

The Board engaged in a very active discussion on the second topic with regard to the relationship between sustainable development, security and arms control. In examining the linkages, the Board highlighted the fact that there were many other factors at play that could aggravate challenges to security and development, in particular, governance and livelihood issues. In this regard, the Board recommended the following:

(a) Encouraging the strengthening of existing international instruments such as the Arms Trade Treaty and the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (Firearms Protocol);

(b) Establishing indicators for measurement, such as the marking of small arms. Strong emphasis should be placed upon tapping new technology for tracing, tracking, and identifying small arms;

(c) Building capacity in Member States, with the goal of detecting and preventing legal arms from being diverted towards illicit possession and use;

(d) Reinforcing mechanisms and procedures related to security sector reform and security sector governance and disarmament demobilization and reintegration;

(e) Building platforms, partnerships and coalitions that include civil society and the private sector to facilitate compliance with and implementation of the above goals.

Other important measures that the Board suggested be examined include the following:

(a) Voluntary measures, confidence-building, awareness-raising, reporting, information sharing and the collection, stockpiling and destruction of weapons;

(b) The development, where appropriate, of comprehensive programmes on armed violence prevention, integrated into development frameworks;

(c) The inclusion of national measures to regulate small arms and light weapons in longer-term peacebuilding strategies.

With respect to the emerging nexus between chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear threats, cybersecurity and terrorism, the Board recognized the importance of creating greater understanding and awareness of the potential threat of terrorists using cybermeans to cause death, destruction and disruption on a scale comparable to the use of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear weapons. The Board suggested that the Secretary-General might wish to highlight the issue, including on the occasion of the general debate at the seventy-first session of the General Assembly and in his message to the Review Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction in November 2016.

The Board recommended that the topic remain on its agenda at least for the year to come. The Board suggested that, in addition to further exploration of the complexities of the issue as a whole, its work be focused on two specific issues:

(a) The threat of cyberattacks by terrorists on nuclear facilities;

(b) The potential role of cyberattacks in threatening biosecurity.

For its work in 2017, the Board proposed renaming the topic as: "The potential terrorist use of cybermeans to threaten nuclear security and biosecurity".

Serving as the Board of Trustees of UNIDIR, the Advisory Board approved the workplan and budget of the Institute for the period 2016-2017 and approved the submission to the General Assembly of the report of the Director of the Institute on the activities and financial status of UNIDIR. The Board of Trustees expressed its gratitude to the Director and staff of UNIDIR for successfully managing the Institute's projects. The Board also expressed its appreciation of the support by the Secretary-General for UNIDIR and hoped that he would continue to support ongoing efforts to secure its future.

I. Introduction

1. The Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters held its sixty-fifth session in Geneva from 27 to 29 January 2016 and its sixty-sixth session in New York from 29 June to 1 July 2016. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 38/183 O. The report of the Director of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), approved by the Board serving as its Board of Trustees, has been submitted in document A/71/162.

2. Mely Caballero Anthony (Philippines) presided over both sessions in 2016.

3. The present report summarizes the deliberations of the Board during the two sessions and the specific recommendations it conveyed to the Secretary-General.

II. Substantive discussions and recommendations

A. Challenges facing the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and its review process, with a particular focus on the Middle East: lessons learned from non-United Nations and regional processes

4. At its sixty-fifth and sixty-sixth sessions, the Advisory Board held an in-depth discussion on the challenges facing the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and its review process, with a particular focus on the Middle East: lessons learned from non-United Nations and regional processes. To facilitate the discussion, the Secretariat circulated "food-for-thought" papers that had been prepared by Board members Wael al-Assad, Camille Grand and Vladimir Orlov. The Board was given a presentation by Randy Rydell from Mayors for Peace.

5. In view of the complex challenges facing the Treaty, the Board recognized that the interrelated nature of the processes could be further debated. In a first discussion among Board members, the value of lessons learned from non-United Nations and regional processes was recognized and it was concluded that that would be a good topic for in-depth work at a future session.

Urgent challenges facing the Treaty

6. The Board examined the Treaty review process in the light of the outcome of the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The members of the Board expressed a shared concern that the review process had not only failed to deliver a consensus document but had also failed to engage in substantive debates on many relevant issues. Deliberations at the review conferences, the Board observed, had become more polarized, leading to deadlock at a time when nuclear challenges had become more onerous than at any other time since the end of the cold war.

7. The Board noted with great concern in that connection the recent nuclear and missile tests by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The Board recognized that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea nuclear crisis, beyond its immediate regional security consequences, had global implications and posed a serious challenge to the non-proliferation regime. The Board underscored the importance of the full implementation by all Member States of Security Council resolution 2270

(2016). In spite of the latest developments, the Board believed that, should the Democratic People's Republic of Korea demonstrate a genuine willingness to put an end to its nuclear programme, a multilateral dialogue aimed at achieving a comprehensive resolution of the situation with regard to the country's nuclear programme should be pursued. Pending a comprehensive solution, it could aim at an interim agreement under which the Democratic People's Republic of Korea would desist from further nuclear tests, missile tests, further nuclear weapons production and fissile material production, and halt the proliferation of sensitive materials and technologies.

8. The Board underlined the need to move away from entrenched positions and to restore the search for consensus that had prevailed throughout the history of the Treaty. In that context, the Board noted that the Treaty was not only a non-proliferation and disarmament treaty but also a cornerstone of international security. The Board expressed concern that, if the current situation were to remain unchanged, the Treaty would be undermined and could lose relevance, with a risk of nuclear "anarchy".

9. Given the emergence of new nuclear challenges in the context of the significant unravelling of international security, the Board expressed the need to inject a clearer shared understanding of the strategic context into the discussions in order to avoid the widening gap between debates on the Treaty and the broader security environment. To that end, the Board suggested the allocation of an appropriate amount of time at the Preparatory Commission meetings and the review conference for such debates. The Board considered that that would be an opportunity for sharing different perspectives and concerns regarding the nuclear environment and for promoting a better understanding of the positions of different constituencies. The Board also suggested appointing the Chair of the next review conference and the Bureau much earlier in the process in order to facilitate early preparation for the Conference.

10. The Board expressed its concern that the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty had not entered into force because eight annex 2 States (China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Israel, Pakistan and the United States of America) had yet to sign and/or ratify it. It would soon be 20 years since the Treaty was opened for signature. That should serve as an impetus for the countries that had not yet signed and/or ratified the Treaty to do so as soon as possible. Facilitating the ratifications and entry into force of the Treaty should be an important priority for the international community. In the meantime, it was also important to provide all possible support for the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization and to expand and strengthen the Organization's monitoring network.

11. With regard to the implementation of article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, on the settlement of disputes, the Board recognized that the lack of recent progress in nuclear disarmament was frustrating. In the current challenging global security environment, further deep nuclear arms reductions seemed unrealistic in the short term. Some positive steps, however, were both desirable and feasible, and they would make it possible to move towards the goal of nuclear disarmament.

12. First, it should be noted that the Russian Federation and the United States were currently implementing the provisions of the Treaty between the United States of

America and the Russian Federation on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms. It was essential, in the Board's view, that both sides continue to diligently comply with that Treaty until it expired in 2021. They should pursue dialogue in order to lay the ground for a new treaty. That new treaty could also include limitations on deployed strategic systems (warheads and delivery vehicles), deployed and non-deployed launchers, and non-deployed nuclear warheads. Bilateral negotiations could also include other arms control issues, such as sea-based and air-based cruise missiles and missile defence systems.

13. Second, the Board had expressed concern that several States continued to ramp up their nuclear arsenals. Although the global nuclear weapons stockpile was shrinking, the process was not universal. Even some of the nuclear-weapon States that were parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty did not publish their nuclear weapons figures, so the size of their stockpiles was difficult to assess. Meanwhile, nuclear-weapon States that remained outside the Treaty continued to increase their arsenals. All the countries that possessed nuclear weapons (both recognized nuclear weapon States under the Treaty and others) should display transparency and could, as a first step, unilaterally release official reports at the Conference on Disarmament, stating the role of nuclear weapons in their national security policy, as well as the numbers and types of their nuclear weapons.

14. Third, the development of long-range conventional weapons (including those using hypersonic technologies) could eventually upset strategic stability. As a first step towards preventing a new arms race, an international conference could be held by all the key actors to discuss the issue. The Office for Disarmament Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat should commission a study on that new issue, implemented with the participation of UNIDIR, so that the Board, on the basis of that analysis, could return to the issue at a later stage and make practical recommendations for arms control measures.

15. Fourth, the Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Elimination of Their Intermediate and Shorter-Range Missiles (Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty) had played an important role in "keeping the lid" on the nuclear arms race in Europe. It remained an important element of strategic stability and European security. Nevertheless, the Treaty limited the military capability of the Russian Federation and the United States, but not of any other countries that possessed advanced land-based missile programmes. The elimination of intermediate and shorter-range missiles by all the countries that possessed nuclear weapons would help to reduce international tensions, especially in conflict-prone regions, and lay the foundations for a multilateral nuclear disarmament process. There were several initiatives in which it was proposed to address the issue by making the Treaty universal or negotiating new regional or global instruments, beyond the International Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation, which was a most important but limited confidence-building tool. It would be timely to arrange a study, initiated by the United Nations, on a multilateral intermediate-range missile regime, and to make sure that discussions in preparation for such a study involved representatives of all the States that possessed intermediate-range missiles. Such discussions would also have a stabilizing effect on the existing Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, which needed to be preserved.

16. Finally, the Board believed that disarmament and non-proliferation education was key to support for nuclear disarmament goals by a new generation of policymakers, scholars and civil society actors. New initiatives in the field of nuclear non-proliferation education should be supported. Students from the States that were newcomers to the peaceful development of nuclear energy, and therefore more vulnerable to proliferation risks, should be specifically encouraged to participate.

17. The Board could play an important role in the development of education in the area of non-proliferation and disarmament. At its sixty-seventh and sixty-eighth sessions, the Board should conduct a review of the implementation of the recommendations made in the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education (A/57/124), and, if necessary, arrange for a revision of the study, to take into account the latest experience and new technologies in the area of education programmes.

18. As the issue of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction had played a central role in the deliberations of the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Board decided to specifically examine that element of the topic as a matter of urgency.

19. The Board acknowledged that the failure of the 2015 Review Conference to adopt a final document had created a vacuum in the review process as well as in the implementation of the resolution on the Middle East of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. That vacuum also extended to the mechanism for holding a conference for all States in the region to begin the process for the creation of the zone, as endorsed by the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (see NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I), sect. IV, para. 7). The Board suggested that the Secretary-General was best placed to take the lead to encourage initiatives and ideas to bring all relevant parties back to the table. The Board recommended the following steps in that regard:

(a) The Secretary-General should call on the three depository States of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and co-sponsors of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East to discuss specific proposals for reinvigorating the process of creating a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. The proposals could include the following points:

(i) UNIDIR could assist as a possible venue and as a secretariat, given its autonomy and independence while being part of the United Nations system;

(ii) The role of facilitator could be assigned to the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, after consultation with the co-conveners and the regional parties;

(iii) A consensus should be freely arrived at by the States in the region in an appropriate environment and within a structured framework facilitated by the co-conveners;

(iv) The role of the conveners and the facilitator should be identified. In that regard, the Board suggested that such a role should include the following:

a. Acting as guardians of the original mandate given in the 1995 Review and Extension Conference in its resolution on the Middle East and the 2010 Review Conference to ensure that the regional parties do not deviate from it;

b. Providing ideas and proposals to address any obstacles in the discussions;

c. Taking stock of progress at each meeting, and reporting to the Review Conference and its Preparatory Committee;

(b) The Secretary-General should call for consultations with the regional parties to secure consensus on the new structure for the consultations;

(c) The Secretary-General would issue an invitation, on his behalf and that of the three depository States as co-conveners, to all the States of the Middle East to resume consultations to prepare for the conference on the Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, as prescribed by the 2010 Review Conference;

(d) The date for the consultations should be set as soon as possible.

Lessons learned from non-United Nations and regional processes

20. In view of the current sense of disorder and uncertainty about the future in many regions, including the Middle East, it was essential to better understand the obstacles to a cooperative multilateral process that could lead to the creation of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. For that purpose, the Board recommended, to the extent that it was possible, to draw from lessons learned from non-United Nations and regional processes on confidence-building, arms control and disarmament. The successful creation of several zones free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction across the globe should inspire the efforts for a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. Important lessons could be drawn regarding working methodologies, the instruments required and arrangements for a political framework.

21. Furthermore, the work of regional organizations, such as the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the Arab League, had shown in various cases how multilateral initiatives could address and even overcome rivalries, exclusionary policies and brinkmanship through the promotion of dialogue, confidence-building and bridge-building.

22. The key to success lay in the mutual acceptance of common principles, the recognition of mutual concerns and interests, pragmatism and the political preparedness to engage in dialogue and cooperation across a large spectrum of relevant topics.

23. **The Board's recommendations to the Secretary-General were as follows:**

(a) **The Board recommended that the review process concentrate on the delivery of actionable recommendations focused on the following five-year cycle. In that regard, members of the Board underlined the need to address some of the most pressing issues associated with nuclear weapons, non-proliferation and disarmament, including, inter alia, the following:**

(i) Agreement on a precise agenda on the appropriate specific steps to be taken in the area of nuclear disarmament. Such steps would include confidence-building and transparency measures aimed at reducing nuclear risks and promoting responsible nuclear policies, building upon the final document of the 2010 Review Conference with its 64 action points, which all parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons should continue to support and to implement;

(ii) The lessons and consequences of non-compliance cases;

(iii) The precedent of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, a country that withdrew from the Treaty following an instance of non-compliance and pursued a nuclear weapons programme. This should be addressed specifically with a view to avoiding a repetition of such behaviour. Full compliance by all States Members of the United Nations with Security Council resolution 2270 (2016) should continue to be encouraged and monitored;

(b) The Board's recommendations on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction are contained in paragraph 19 of the present report;

(c) The Board recommended that the Secretary-General take the initiative to facilitate ratification with a view to accelerating the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and provide all possible support for its Preparatory Commission and to expand and strengthen the organization's monitoring work;

(d) The Board recommended that the Secretary-General urge all countries that possess nuclear weapons (both recognized nuclear-weapon States under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and others) to display transparency and unilaterally release official reports at the Conference on Disarmament, stating the role of nuclear weapons in their national security policies, as well as the numbers and types of their nuclear weapons. In that connection, the Board recommended that the Office for Disarmament Affairs, in collaboration with UNIDIR, conduct a study of the reports submitted by the nuclear-weapon States under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons with a view to examining differences and gaps and suggesting ways of making them more consistent and useful;

(e) The Board recommended that the Secretary-General commission a study, to be implemented with the participation of UNIDIR, on the development of long-range conventional weapons, including those using hypersonic technologies;

(f) The Board recommended that the Secretary-General commission a study, to be initiated by the United Nations, on a multilateral intermediate-range missile regime, and ensure that discussions in preparation of the study involved representatives of all the States that possess intermediate-range missiles;

(g) The Board suggested that, at its sixty-seventh and sixty-eighth sessions, a review be conducted on the implementation of the recommendations made in the United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation

education (A/57/124), taking into account the latest experience and new technologies in the area of education programmes, as well as the role of civil society organizations.

B. The relationship between sustainable development, security and arms control

24. The Board had an in-depth discussion about the relationship between sustainable development, security and arms control. To facilitate the discussion, the Secretariat circulated food-for-thought papers that had been prepared by the following Board members: Mely Caballero Anthony, Rut Diamint, Eboe Hutchful and Fred Tanner. The Board was given a presentation by Daniel Prins from the Office for Disarmament Affairs.

25. The Board took note of the significance of the inclusion of peace, security and justice in the Sustainable Development Goals. Members of the Advisory Board considered that to be an important milestone in that it took account of the close interconnection between development and security. As noted in *The Global Burden of Armed Violence* (Geneva, 2008), armed conflict and armed violence erodes the social fabric of communities, sows fear and insecurity, destroys human and social capital, and impedes sustainable development and economic growth. This is particularly relevant to vulnerable groups and societies in conflict-ridden areas, where there is a proliferation of and easy access to armaments, and where there is an absence of accountable institutions and the rule of law.

26. The Board recognized the pivotal role that weapons played in a complex security environment which provided the conditions conducive to almost all forms of illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons and where organized crime and extremist groups were present. The availability, proliferation and excessive accumulation of arms, the Board noted, was a contributor to armed violence and a serious impediment to the achievement of sustainable development in many countries.

27. In addition, international efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals must take into account critical issues such as emerging technologies and the role of excessive military expenditures relevant to development. The Board was of the opinion that the application of new technologies was essential for achieving sustainable development. However, the potential military applications of such technologies could have a negative impact on security and development. Therefore the military use of emerging technologies should be limited, and existing export control regimes might have to be reviewed in order not to hinder the achievement of the Goals. The relationship between sustainable development and security was also negatively affected by excessive military expenditures. In that context, full participation by all Member States in the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and the United Nations report on military expenditures (see A/70/139) was critical for achieving the Goals.

28. The argument was also advanced that there was not necessarily a direct relationship between development and disarmament. In that context the Board encouraged revisiting the debate on security and development.

29. It was also emphasized that the illicit flows of arms needed to be addressed in the context of security sector governance and the effectiveness of State institutions in dealing with the potential diversion of arms and their illegal possession and use. Additionally, the Board drew attention to the negative impact of mines and unexploded ordinance on sustainable development in post-conflict areas and called for action to deal with that problem on an urgent basis.

30. The Board expressed concern about the wide-ranging impacts of explosive weapons and the ways in which they affected a number of central Sustainable Development Goals. The Board noted that progress towards the Goals was held back by the destruction of vital infrastructure caused by explosive force and its effect on the delivery of services.

31. **The Board's recommendations to the Secretary-General were as follows:**

(a) Highlighting the fact that there were many factors at play that could aggravate challenges to security and development, in particular, governance and livelihood issues, the Board recommended the following:

(i) Encouraging the strengthening of existing international instruments such as the Arms Trade Treaty and the Firearms Protocol;

(ii) Establishing indicators for measurement such as the marking of small arms. Strong emphasis should be placed upon tapping new technology for tracing, tracking, and identifying small arms;

(iii) Building capacity in Member States with the goal of detecting and preventing legal arms from being diverted towards illicit possession and use;

(iv) Reinforcing mechanisms and procedures related to security sector reform, security sector governance and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration;

(v) Building platforms, partnerships and coalitions that included civil society and the private sector to facilitate compliance with and the implementation of the above goals;

(b) Other important measures that the Board suggested be examined included the following:

(i) Voluntary measures, confidence-building, awareness-raising, reporting, information-sharing and the collection, stockpiling and destruction of weapons;

(ii) The development, where appropriate, of comprehensive programmes on armed violence prevention, programmes integrated into development frameworks;

(iii) The inclusion of national measures to regulate small arms and light weapons in longer-term peacebuilding strategies.

C. The emerging nexus between chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear threats, cybersecurity and terrorism

32. The Board welcomed the addition of the topic to its agenda, as it recognized that it had novel and complex implications for international peace and security that

deserved consideration by the Board. In view of the nature of the issues, the Board recognized that not all of its individual components, nor all of the dyadic relationships between them, could be considered in depth. That, the Board said, was partly due to time constraints but also due to the fact that some of the components were long-standing issues, identified and studied elsewhere.

33. The Board continued the discussion that it had begun at its January 2016 session to explore the many complexities of the nexus issue. The Board was given a presentation by Page Stoutland from the Nuclear Threat Initiative on the nexus, with a particular emphasis on nuclear security. It also considered a food-for-thought paper by Sung-joo Choi, as well as additional material provided by Trevor Findlay and Vicente Garrido Rebolledo.

34. Further thought should be given to institutionalizing the issue within the United Nations system in view of the fact that no single part of the machinery was currently responsible for considering the nexus issue. A multi-stakeholder approach was desirable. The United Nations itself, the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) all had important roles to play in their respective domains. They should be afforded the necessary support and resources. The comprehensive review of the status of implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) being conducted in 2016 provided an important opportunity to enhance its implementation and to strengthen support for the Committee. It should take into account emerging trends in nuclear, chemical and biological security as well as the rapid advances in cybertechnology and communications that offered great benefits and opportunities but also increased the risk that non-State actors might misuse them.

35. It was noted that there was a lack of appropriate institutional capacity for considering and dealing with the terrorist cyberthreat to biosecurity. The Secretary-General's mechanism could be triggered only after an alleged attack had occurred. The Biological Weapons Convention lacked a verification and implementation body, apart from the small Implementation Support Unit in Geneva. The Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention could be used as an opportunity to commence the discussion on the potential threat to biosecurity from the cyberterrorism nexus.

36. One issue identified as deserving further study was the need to provide capacity-building assistance, especially to developing countries, in countering the cyberthreat to critical infrastructure, especially that related to chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear threats. Mechanisms should be established for sharing information and best practices. An exemplar of that was the efforts of the international community to strengthen nuclear security.

37. **The Board made the following recommendations to the Secretary-General:**

(a) **Recognizing the importance of creating greater understanding and awareness of the potential threat of terrorists using cybermeans to cause death, destruction and disruption on a scale comparable to the use of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear weapons, the Board suggested that the Secretary-General might wish to use his major presentations to highlight the issue, including during the general debate at the seventy-first session of the General Assembly and in his message to the Review Conference of the Parties**

to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction in November.

(b) The Board recommended that the nexus topic remain on its agenda for at least the coming year. The Board suggested that, in addition to further exploration of the complexities of the issue as a whole, its work be focused on two specific issues, on the basis of its identification of two of the most serious threats. These were:

(i) The threat of cyberattacks by terrorists on nuclear facilities;

(ii) The potential role of cybermeans in threatening biosecurity.

In order to focus its work the following year, the Board proposed renaming the topic as: "The potential terrorist use of cybermeans to threaten nuclear security and biosecurity".

III. Board of Trustees of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research

38. The Board welcomed the fact that the situation facing UNIDIR had improved since its previous report. Over the previous year, thanks to the efforts of UNIDIR, the Board, the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs and Member States, important progress had been achieved. As a result of that cooperative effort, numerous long-standing problems facing UNIDIR had been resolved. The Institute had emerged from a long period of crisis as a more robust and stable entity.

39. There had been resolution or measurable improvement regarding nearly all issues highlighted in the previous year's report. UNIDIR had successfully made the transition to Umoja and was now fully embedded in and compliant with the administrative and financial processes of the United Nations. The required reserves of around $1 million had been set aside for existing liabilities in compliance with International Public Sector Accounting Standards requirements, thereby ensuring that UNIDIR could honour its contractual commitments.

40. The Stability Fund, a revolving capital fund established in 2015 (see A/70/186, para. 40), had proven its utility, permitting projects to address short-term liquidity and cashflow issues. As the liability reserves were held separately from the Stability Fund, full capitalization could be achieved for around $300,000, rather than $1 million, as originally estimated. The Fund was close to reaching that goal. The Board would periodically review the size of the Fund and, if necessary, make recommendations as to increasing the Fund target.

41. On matters related to human resources, the Board was pleased to note that the issue of non-standard employment contracts formerly given to some staff had been resolved. All staff were now on contracts in compliance with United Nations human resources policy.

42. The Board of Trustees reiterated its support for the recommendations of the independent institutional assessment conducted in January 2015 (see A/70/186, para. 44). In particular, the Board highlighted the recommendation that the irreducible core of the institutional structure comprised five positions. In that

regard, the Board welcomed the establishment of the position of Chief of Research in 2015, which would further strengthen research design and integrity.

43. On financial matters, the Board noted with satisfaction that earmarked funding for project activities continued to rise. That was an indicator of the value placed by funders on the quality of the work of UNIDIR and their willingness to invest in it.

44. While the period of crisis was now over, the remaining issue facing UNIDIR was how to address the growing gap between institutional (unearmarked) and project (earmarked) support. That was not a new issue; it had dogged the Institute since its establishment over 35 years before. However, as noted in previous reports, the gap between earmarked and unearmarked funding had become untenable. The Board recognized the Director's resource mobilization efforts, but also noted that the funding environment was not favourable for institutional funding. Donors had a strong and unwavering preference for funding activities, not the structural elements that supported them. The Board encouraged the Director and staff to continue their efforts to raise institutional funding, as one component of a sustainable package for institutional support.

45. Over several years, the strict cost-recovery model of UNIDIR for projects had strengthened the financial position of the Institute through the recovery of both direct and indirect costs on all activities. However, donors had clearly indicated that UNIDIR had reached a ceiling on project overheads and that any increase would dissuade further funding.

46. The Board noted with satisfaction that, following the adoption of General Assembly resolution 70/69 on the thirty-fifth anniversary of UNIDIR, a one-off increase in the regular budget subvention was expected for the biennium 2018-2019. The Board reiterated its previous conviction that the minimum institutional structure comprised five posts (see A/70/186, para. 44) and its recommendation that, in order to ensure the operational sustainability and independence of the Institute, the subvention should cover the costs of all the Institute's institutional staff (see para. 39).

47. The Board looked forward to the independent third-party assessment of UNIDIR, which would be carried out in early 2018, to be followed by a report of the Secretary-General. The Board expected that the sustainable and stable funding structure and operating model for the Institute outlined in the report of the Secretary-General would also address the need for an increased regular budget subvention.

48. In order to address the long-standing and growing gap between earmarked project funding and unearmarked funds provided for the institutional operations budget, the Board reiterated its previous recommendation that the subvention to the Institute be increased on a sustained basis so that the necessary institutional framework was in place to support the development, management, implementation, reporting and evaluation of project activities in conformity with United Nations rules and procedures.

IV. Future work

49. The members of the Advisory Board exchanged views on a number of possible topics for discussion at its 2016 sessions. Possible areas of future work included further examination of the potential terrorist use of cybermeans to threaten nuclear

security and biosecurity; the impact of emerging technologies on international security; and review and update of the 2002 United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education (A/57/124), including the role of civil society organizations.

V. Conclusion

50. During its two sessions in 2016, the Board concluded deliberations on the three items on its agenda: the challenges facing the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and its review process with a particular focus on the Middle East: lessons learned from non-United Nations and regional processes; the relationship between sustainable development, security and arms control; and the emerging nexus between chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear threats, cybersecurity and terrorism. It provided a set of recommendations to the Secretary-General on each of those items. Serving as the Board of Trustees of UNIDIR, the Board reviewed the research activities of the Institute.

Annex

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